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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/077,599	02/15/2002	Hirokazu Hisano	GK/48	1547
7590	05/30/2006		EXAMINER	
W. L. Gore & Associates, Inc. 551 Paper Mill Road P.O. Box 9206 Newark, DE 19714-9206				AHMAD, NASSER
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		1772		

DATE MAILED: 05/30/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/077,599	HISANO ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Nasser Ahmad	1772	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 15 March 2006.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1,3-14 and 20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1,3-14 and 20 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 15 February 2002 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner. Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a). Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Rejections Maintained

1. Claims 1, 8-13 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mills in view of Hernandez (5418023) for reasons of record made in the last Office Action of September 15, 2005.
2. Claims 1, 3-4, 8-14 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mills in view of Hernandez and the English Translation of EP Application: 84112904.2 for reasons of record made in the last Office Action.
3. Claims 5-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mills in view of Hernandez, the English Translation and Hamilton (5486010) for reasons of record made in the last Office Action.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments filed March 15, 2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues that the currently amended claim 1 specifies the orientation of the gasket in use is such that the end faces of the laminate contact the surfaces to be sealed and this orientation is not disclosed by Hernandez or the West German reference disclosed therein. This is not deemed to be convincing because, as recited in the claim 1, the laminate has end faces and this is disclosed in Hernandez as explained in the last Office Action. As for the phrase "the ends faces are adapted to contact", it is directed to an intended use of the end of the laminate because the phrase "adapted to"

only requires the ability to so perform in the future and hence, is not found to be of positive limitation. In fact, applicant's acknowledgement the "orientation of the gasket in use" is noted as being directed to the future use of the laminate.

Applicant also argues that the phrase "adapted to" in the claim was sanctioned by the Court of Customs and Patent Appeals in *In re Venezia* 189 USPQ 149 (1976) to impart structural limitation and per MPEP 2173.05(g). This is not found to be persuasive because unlike the *In re Venezia* case, the instantly claimed invention is not directed to a kit of component parts capable of being assembled. On the contrary, the instant claims are directed to a sealing material and the phrase "adapted to" herein directs the future use of the sealing material with the surfaces of a vessel to be sealed.

Thus, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, it remains the examiner's position that the claimed invention is found to be obvious over the prior art of record.

Conclusion

5. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Nasser Ahmad whose telephone number is 571-272-1487. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM, and on alternate Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Harold Pyon can be reached on 571-272-1498. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Nasser Ahmad 5/23/06
Nasser Ahmad
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1772

N. Ahmad.
May 23, 2006.